Acts Chapter 25 Verses 1 – 8

* Festus sits on the ***judgment seat*** there in Caesarea hearing accusations against Paul and Paul’s defense…but in truth, ***Paul is not the one that is he is judging, Paul is not the one being judged.*** What will Festus do with the Gospel? Ultimately, this is the singular question that will be the basis of the final judgment of every person.
* If I were a friend of Festus, I would pray that he judges wisely. Why would the Jewish leaders ask to ambush Paul? Why not just ask to be heard? Offer up the crimes he has committed and the overwhelming evidence. Festus, if he just considers…**wisdom isn’t out of grasp.** Why would Felix have housed Paul? Protected Paul? Fed him and given him liberty not for the past 2 days, 2 weeks or 2 months…for 2 full years? Festus, if he just considers…wisdom is not out of grasp.
* Here’s the issue. Wisdom and righteousness is often and sometimes easily clouded and overcome by emotion, circumstance and self-focus. Festus is indeed on the judgment seat, but **it is not** Paul being judged.

Acts Chapter 25 Verses 9 – 12

* Paul knows that what Festus just offered was a **death sentence**, and we know it too. How? Because as Paul makes his way back to Jerusalem, ***that’s the path of the ambush.*** Festus had judged poorly. Does Paul know this now? No! His nephew isn’t there tipping him off anymore…but…Paul is in league with the Holy Spirit and the Holy Spirit is wisdom Himself…no delay, no hesitation, comes naturally to Paul…*no way will I go there…*

Acts Chapter 25 Verse 13

* Ok, this gentleman is an ***absolute mess.*** This is King Agrippa. He is a Harrod. Harrod is a title just like King is a title, although that would be a pretty neat first name, “King.” ***Unless you turned out to be a bum. HA!*** Anyway, this King Agrippa, his great-grandfather had tried to kill Jesus as a baby. His grandfather had John the Baptist beheaded. His father had martyred the first apostle, James. This Agrippa himself was a **hot mess** because Bernice, his significant other, ***was his sister!*** And here he is, about to come into contact with **opportunity** – an opportunity to put a book end on all of that history and mess and be made ***brand new in Christ!***

Acts Chapter 25 Verses 14 – 19

* That word in the Greek isn’t just *“back to life,”* (as PM Dawn plays in my head), what Paul had **affirmed,** not just stated…that would have been a different word and thought, but affirmed, eye witness proof, and that word *“alive”* means, *“alive endlessly!”*

Acts Chapter 25 Verses 20 – 23

* Again, we see the sons of men with their heads held high entering into the scene with great confidence and celebration but ***each one of them are on trial in the eyes of heaven!*** We as Christians need to have the correct perspective! *Pride* is something celebrated in this world…**that’s nonsense.** Absolute foolery. ***Humility is the essence of eternity and the heartbeat of heaven!*** Pride is pitiful and yet the world celebrates it! ***With the correct perspective we rise above the landfill of human error!***
* Isaiah 40:30-31 says, *“Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fail, but those that wait* (like waiters) *on the Lord, they shall renew their strength* (constantly)! *They shall mount up with wings like eagles*, (get above it all – above all the pomp and the puny pretend passing and perishable pride), *they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint.”* Paul walks in held in the chains of men and yet the **only free and soaring soul there.** It’s intriguing to think what these men would say or so now if they knew that as the generations of men talked about them, they would be the losers…

Acts Chapter 25 Verses 24 – 27

* ***Unreasonable.*** Nothing against him. Two years of imprisonment. Two covert committed kill mobs. Three trials. And nothing, ***no accusation would stick.*** Paul had said of himself, *“I myself always strive to have a conscience without offense toward God and men,”* and, *“I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day.”* Have you forgotten what its like, what it does to your heart of hearts, to have **nothing** in your hidden life that would bring you public shame? Is that statement even ***foreign*** to you? I call you today to conversion. Transformation. Not just sorrow in repentance…but ***God honoring revolution of heart!***
* The power of the Holy Spirit promised to you is not to fill you with the power you need to *survive the day with joy*…the power of the Holy Spirit promised to you is to free you unto ***life and life abundant***. To once again breathe into our dark souls the breath of life. We cannot do that conformed to the image of the world…are you yet transformed by the renewing of your mind, ***proving in your life and heart and mind and strength that good an acceptable and perfect will of God?*** (Romans 12:1-2)
* Do not **gauge** your growth or even your salvation on what you know and what you agree with or even what you’ve said *“yes”* to…gauge your growth or even your salvation by the presence of the fruit of the Spirit in your heart and life! Galatians 5:22-26, ***love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control***…are these the defining marks of you such that when the accusation of anything else comes, your simple and objective and brief defense causes even the world to say, *“I cannot even specify the charges against him.”*
* Don’t lose heart. There are growing pains. Fruit that is just beginning to bud is often sour…give it time…keep watering, keep allowing the light of the gospel of grace to shine…photosynthesize, baby!! God is faithful!!
* This also applies in another sense. This is the response of God to the accuser of your soul, because of Jesus Christ. As Satan brings all sorts of accusation against each one of us, Jesus gives our defense before the Father. (Romans 8:33-34) And in light of clean conscience and no reportable offense, nothing can stick, God’s eternal response to all of the saved, *“I cannot even specify the charges against him.”*
* Festus is in a bind…how can he send Paul to Rome? How can he send Paul to Caesar? ***On what basis?*** He wouldn’t dare waste Caesars time… But Paul can’t be set free…that would enrage the Jews and they would just kill him. He can’t hold him in Caesarea…you can’t imprison a Roman without reason. So, he is in a bind. You know who isn’t? Paul. How about you? Are you in a bind today? Especially with what you’ve heard…what will you do about it? Please don’t let your life answer, nothing…that would simply be…unreasonable.